

## Self in Question – Part Three – Spring 2010

### Orientation – Week 8

In this week's phone call, I emphasized the significance of going 'beyond' the concerns of the self, as suggested in the final paragraph on p. 72 (the end of chapter 9). That is where the reading for this week starts.

Making the concerns of the self central commits us to a certain way of life. Living in this way, we are happy if the self's wishes are fulfilled and unhappy if they are not, happy if there is nothing to be afraid of or anxious about and unhappy if we get caught up in worries or concerns.

All this is relatively easy to understand, but it leaves us powerless to do much about it. We very literally "don't know what to do." The reason for that "not knowing what to do" is that when the self and its concerns are central to knowing, we limit the kinds of knowing to which we have access. That is the key point we have been exploring for a while now.

How do we conduct this exploration? We have to do it within our own experience. We have to look into the self and its concerns in a way that lets us look beyond them. This 'goes against the grain', as we say in English, because it is the very nature of the self and its concerns that they resist being questioned. That is the tension and the opportunity in TSK inquiry. It is what Love of Knowledge has in mind when it speaks (p. 84) of taking responsibility for knowledge.

By this point in the program, it should be clear that taking responsibility is something we each have to do in our own way. Right now—right in this moment—you are involved in your experience. You are shaping it in certain ways, and you are excluding certain possibilities. It is the range of what is happening right now that offers a field of inquiry. The 'place' to find new possibilities is within the range of what is already going on. As the reading says, we do not have to commit ourselves to particular ways of knowing. We do not even have to change our conventional way of knowing. All we have to do is know within the way we already know. As Rinpoche writes elsewhere in Love of Knowledge, we can know knowing in knowing. That is all, and that is enough.